Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

10 May 2017

Original: Chinese/English

First session
Vienna, 2-12 May 2017

Nuclear-weapon-free zones and nuclear issues in the Middle East

Working paper submitted by China

1. The establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones is of great significance in promoting nuclear disarmament, preventing the proliferation of nuclear weapons and maintaining global and regional peace, security and stability.

2. The international community should actively support efforts by relevant countries to establish nuclear-weapons-free zones, based on the article VII of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and the guidelines on establishing nuclear-weapons-free zones adopted by the Disarmament Commission in 1999.

3. The nuclear-weapon States should undertake unconditionally not to use or threaten to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear-weapon States or nuclear-weapon-free zones and conclude an international legal instrument in this regard.

4. The nuclear-weapon States should respect the legal status of nuclear-weapon-free zones and sign and ratify the protocols to the relevant treaties on nuclear-weapon-free zones. This year we celebrated the fiftieth anniversary of the opening for signature of the Treaty for the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons in Latin America and the Caribbean (Treaty of Tlatelolco), and China appreciates its great contribution to promoting the establishment of nuclear-weapon-free zones and to enhancing global peace and security. China firmly supports the efforts of the countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations to build a nuclear-weapon-free zone in Southeast Asia and is willing to sign as early as possible a protocol to the Treaty on the South-East Asia Nuclear-Weapon-Free Zone once it is open for signature.

5. Regional security and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, including nuclear weapons, are closely interrelated. All parties concerned should make further efforts to promote the peace process in the Middle East in a spirit of reconciliation and cooperation in order to enhance peace and stability in the region.

6. While facilitating the reconciliation and cooperation of the countries of the Middle East and promoting the Middle East peace process, the international community should continue to attach importance to and support relevant proposals

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and efforts to establish a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction. Concrete efforts should be made to promote the establishment of such a zone in accordance with relevant General Assembly resolutions, the resolution on the Middle East adopted at the 1995 Review and Extension Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (see NPT/CONF.1995/32 (Part I), annex), and relevant provisions of the Final Documents of the 2000 and 2010 Review Conferences. Relevant States should be encouraged to adopt flexible and practical measures to break the deadlock and promote the early convening of an international conference on the establishment of a Middle East zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

7. Israel should accede to the Non-Proliferation Treaty as a non-nuclear-weapon State and place all its nuclear facilities under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) safeguards. The States concerned in the region should sign and ratify comprehensive safeguards agreements with IAEA and be encouraged to sign and ratify the additional protocols thereto. All these measures are of great importance for strengthening the international non-proliferation regime and promoting the establishment of a zone free of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction in the Middle East.